

Application No.: 09/874,123
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.111
Reply to Office Action dated January 4, 2005
May 4, 2005

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 2 and 7 have been cancelled and claims 1, 3-4, 6, 8-9, 11, 13 and 15 have been amended in the application. Currently, claims 1, 3-6 and 8-16 are pending in the application.

The indication that claims 3-4 and 8-9 contain allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. By this amendment, claims 3 and 8 have been amended to be rewritten in independent form. Claim 3 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 1 and most of the limitations of claim 2. Also, claim 8 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claims 6 and 7. Additionally, claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 3 and claim 9 has been amended to depend from claim 8. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3-4 and 8-9 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 5-6 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Yonemoto et al. Claims 2, 7 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Yonemoto et al. in view of Ogawa. The Examiner admitted that Yonemoto et al. do not teach the timing data, the priority data and the setter.

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The Examiner believed that Ogawa taught these features. The Examiner also believed that it would have been obvious to modify the control means of Yonemoto et al. with the structure of the control means of Ogawa for the purpose of designating a setting means for setting the priority and time for plural transmission to different receiving apparatuses.

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

The present invention relates to technology for image data transmission and reception technology for transmitting and receiving image data between an image data transmission device and an image data reception device, which are connected via a network such as the Internet.

The present invention specifically discloses that in the transmission and reception table shown in Fig. 6, the registered transmission instructions are managed by means of registration numbers in registration order, and the table includes the transmission destination, the filename of the image data to be transmitted, and the processing priority, and also records the timing at which each transmission instruction was issued.

The transmission indicators for these image data are all registered at "normal" priority, but as shown in Fig. 7 and Fig.

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8, it is also possible to set a "high" or "highest" priority. For example, the transmission of image data having a "high" priority, as described hereinafter, is implemented in advance of the image data having "normal" priority of the image data having "pending" status, which was accepted for image data up to 30 minutes previously, and the transmission of image data having "highest" priority is implemented in advance of all image data having "pending" status.

In the present image processing system, transmissions of image data from an image management device to a plurality of print control devices are carried out in parallel on the basis of an established order for each transmission destination set in accordance with the timing at which transmission was instructed and the priority set by the operator, and hence a communications circuit of approximately several 10 - 100 Kbps can be used efficiently at all times at the printing control devices for receiving image data, thereby making it possible to transmit and receive image data in an efficient manner while using communications circuits of relatively narrow bandwidth in the printing control devices.

The memory may store priority data indicating a transmission priority in addition to transmission destination data identifying

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an image data reception device forming a transmission destination and timing data indicating the timing at which transmission was instructed, in a corresponding fashion with each group of image data to be transmitted, inside the storage section. The setter may set a transmission order for the image data for each transmission destination on the basis of the timing data and the priority data.

It is possible to set at least two levels of priority in the priority data, and set a transmission order for the image data for each transmission destination in such a manner that the transmission of image data having a high priority is performed prior to the transmission of image data having normal priority which was instructed for transmission within a prescribed period of time before the timing of the new instruction.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite "a memory which stores the plurality of groups of image data transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group, timing data indicating the time at which transmission of the image data was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; a setter which sets for each

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transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data".

Independent claim 6 has been amended to recite "storing the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; setting for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data".

Independent claim 11 has been amended to recite "the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicate whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data, are stored in a storage section in a corresponding fashion with each group of image data to be transmitted; a transmission order for

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image data for each transmission destination is set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data".

Independent claim 13 has been amended to recite "a memory which stores the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data that identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; a setter which sets for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data".

Independent claim 15 has been amended to recite "storing the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data that identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; setting for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data".

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Yonemoto et al. and Ogawa do not disclose or suggest these features.

Yonemoto et al. relate to an information transmission control apparatus for transmitting the same information to a plurality of destinations, and an information reception apparatus for receiving the information from the information transmission control apparatus. More specifically, Yonemoto et al. relate to an information transmission control apparatus for relaying information sent through a channel from an information provider apparatus to a plurality of destinations and an information reception apparatus for receiving the information and notifying the user of the information reception.

Yonemoto et al. disclose that Fig. 2 shows the functional construction of the information transmission control apparatus 1000 of the first embodiment. The information transmission control apparatus 1000 is a personal computer that is linked to the public network 1201. Its hardware construction includes a CPU, a memory, and a hard disc. Also, its functional construction includes a destination information storage unit 1010, a transmission data storage unit 1020, a transmission control unit 1030, and a transmission unit 1040.

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Yonemoto et al. also disclose that the destination information storage unit 1010 stores destination information set showing a plurality of destinations, such as telephone numbers or group IDs. The transmission data storage unit 1020 stores transmission data to be sent to the information reception apparatuses 1100.

Yonemoto et al. also disclose that the delay time setting unit 1143 has a memory and sets delay time using one of the random numbers generated by the random number generation unit 1141, the delay time then being stored in the memory.

Yonemoto et al. do not disclose that a memory which stores the plurality of groups of image data transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group, timing data indicating the time at which transmission of the image data was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; a setter which sets for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 1.

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Yonemoto et al. also do not disclose that storing the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; setting for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 6.

Yonemoto et al. also do not disclose that the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicate whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data, are stored in a storage section in a corresponding fashion with each group of image data to be transmitted; a transmission order for image data for each transmission destination is set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 11.

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Applicant respectfully submits that Yonemoto et al. do not disclose that the device controls the order of transmission of a plurality of groups of image data to an image data reception device, in accordance with timing data and a priority data. The present invention discloses that a priority data is stored and the order of image data transmission is set in accordance with the timing data and the priority data.

For these reasons, it is believed that Yonemoto et al. do not teach or suggest the present claimed features of the present invention. Therefore it is respectfully requested that the 35 USC 102(e) rejection based on Yonemoto et al. be withdrawn.

Applicants also respectfully submit that Ogawa does not make up for the deficiencies in Yonemoto et al.

Ogawa relates to a recording system for a facsimile apparatus, more particularly, it relates to a preferential recording system provided for a transmission unit and a reception unit in a facsimile apparatus, and enabling control of priority of recording of data and/or time of recording in the reception unit of the reception side.

Ogawa discloses in Figs. 2A and 2B, a priority/time setting unit 14, a time counting unit 15, a priority/time memory 16, and a priority/time decision unit 17.

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Ogawa also discloses that in the transmission 12 of the facsimile apparatus for the transmission side, the priority/time setting unit 14 sets the priority of the recording at the reception side and this priority of the recording is transferred to the reception side through the network. Further, the priority/time setting unit 14 sets the time of the recording at the reception side and the time of the recording is also transferred to the reception side. Still further, the priority/time setting unit 14 can control the time of the recording when the priority of the recording and the time of the recording are simultaneously set therein.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention discloses the timing data of the present invention represents the time when the transmission is instructed. The priority is made to order which plurality of groups of image data are transmitted from an image data transmission device to an image data reception device. According to the present invention, the plurality of groups of image data are normally transmitted in the order according to the timing data. However, then a priority data is associated with a group of image data, that group of image data is transmitted with respect to the priority of the other groups.

Also, applicant respectfully submits that in Ogawa, a

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priority and timing may be indicated upon transmission of facsimile message which may includes image data. However, the timing of Ogawa is the time when the facsimile machine that received that received the message, outputs the message, i.e. prints out the message on paper. In addition, the priority of Ogawa is the priority in the order by which the facsimile receiver records the received messages.

Ogawa also does not disclose that a memory which stores the plurality of groups of image data transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group, timing data indicating the time at which transmission of the image data was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; a setter which sets for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 1.

Ogawa also does not disclose that storing the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception

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device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; setting for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 6.

Ogawa also does not disclose that the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data which identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device that receives the image data of the group timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicate whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data, are stored in a storage section in a corresponding fashion with each group of image data to be transmitted; a transmission order for image data for each transmission destination is set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 11.

Ogawa also does not disclose that a memory which stores the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data that identify for each group of image data, an image data

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reception device timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; a setter which sets for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 13.

Ogawa also does not disclose that storing the plurality of groups of image data, transmission destination data that identify for each group of image data, an image data reception device timing data indicating the time at which transmission was instructed, and a priority data that indicates whether the group of image data should be transmitted with priority to other image data; setting for each transmission destination, the order in which the plurality of groups of image data are transmitted, the order being set on the basis of the timing data and the priority data as claimed in claim 15.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that Yonemoto et al. and Ogawa, individually or in combination, do not teach, disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine these

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references to render the present claims obvious. Further there is no teaching or suggestion in these references that would allow a combination of references that the transmission of image data is arranged based on timing data and priority data.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 11, 13 and 15 and dependent claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 16 are allowable over Yonemoto et al. and Ogawa.

In view of foregoing claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and an action to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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